

McGill University

Faculty of Religious Studies

RELG 571: Ethics, Medicine and Religion - 15334 Winter 2020
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Instructor: Professor Gaëlle Fiasse

<http://www.mcgill.ca/philosophy/people/faculty/fiasse>

<http://www.mcgill.ca/religiousstudies/about/faculty-staff/gaelle-fiasse>

Monday: 12:05- 1:55 PM, Birks 105

Contacting me

Email: write to me at gaelle.fiasse@mcgill.ca. Please write « RELG 571 » in the subject. I will not use « Mycourses » for emails (only for submission of the electronic version of assignments).

Phone: 514-398-4400 extension: 094409

Office hours (Leacock 940): after the seminar and by appointment.

Topic

The seminar will focus on the sources of bioethics, by paying attention to questions of meaning and reality. We will examine the question of the foundation of ethics and the relationship between autonomy and vulnerability. We will revisit the notion of voluntary and involuntary actions in order to situate better the theme of responsibility and fragility. We will examine the pact of care between the physician and the patient by paying attention to Paul Ricœur's ethics. Special attention will be given to ultimate questions where medicine and religion meet or do not meet. Three sources will be used : academic articles and books, autobiographies, and videos.

General Aims

- philosophical and analytical

To develop critical thinking in order to be able to underline the core arguments and the challenges at stake with questions of bioethics.

To be able to think about concrete experience, thanks to the analysis of philosophical texts, videos and stories.

To develop skills in order to express one's views orally and in writing, by remaining attentive to other's views.

To be able to think of ultimate questions at the boundaries of philosophy and religion.

To have a better grasp of what is at stake in terms of responsibility in front of the fragile human being.

To think and discuss in a seminar-fashioned the notions of personhood, human dignity, suffering and dying.

Methodology and Evaluation

No specific prerequisite is required, either in Philosophy or in Religious Studies, even though a background in philosophy is an asset. It is the student's responsibility to express any difficulties he/she may have with the course's content and the readings during the seminar or my office hours. One major advantage of the class will be that we will continuously evaluate it throughout the semester, which gives room for improvements to be made in the assignments and for us to become more comfortable during class discussions. It is a 500-level course, which means that it is expected that each student has acquired the necessary skills to read and prepare for the seminar, and (a) will come to each class with the readings, (b) having read and (c) having prepared them. All papers can be submitted either in English or in French.

Participation	15%	Attendance, in-class participation, quality of discussion
Short Papers and Oral Presentation	30%	2 short papers, three pages (single space) and their oral presentation
Research Paper	25 %	10 pages (double-space)
Oral Exam	30 %	

Commitments and use of electronic devices

I am available to help you attain the objectives of the course and to be attentive to your questions and possible difficulties with the course material. I highly value a collegial environment in the classroom and mutual attention being paid to each other's contributions. Therefore, all computers, mobile phones, web-accessible electronic devices (iPads, etc.) must be turned off during the class period and stored away. As you know, it is not really pleasant to express one's views orally when others are writing emails. Exceptions for the use of computers will only be made with an official note from the Office for Student with Disabilities, but even in this case, Internet access will be prohibited during class time.

Required textbook

- Paul Ricœur, *Reflections on the Just*, transl. by D. Pellauer, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 2007. ISBN: 978-0-226-71345-8 or 0-226-71345-8 (available at McGill bookstore). (Available at McGill Bookstore, and on reserve at the library).
- For the Francophones: Paul Ricœur, *Le Juste 2*, Paris, Esprit, 2001.
- Anne-Dauphine Julliand, *Two Small Footprints in Wet Sand*, transl. by Adriana Hunter, New York, Arcade Publishing, 2013. ISBN: 978-1-61145-824-4 (Available at McGill Bookstore, and on reserve at the library).
- Articles (available on Mycourses).

Details for the evaluation:

There will be five themes that we will examine during the semester:

- Encountering a person with a disability
- Autonomy and vulnerability
- The voluntary and the involuntary
- The pact of care
- Ultimate questions

The evaluation takes into consideration both the five themes and the possibility to improve one's grade during the semester.

Plagiarism

Not mentioning your sources, published or unpublished, constitutes an act of plagiarism. For instance, if you use a website without due reference in the text and in the bibliography; if you use a paper written by another (ideas or words of someone else), without making any reference to the author; if you quote a book or a paper as a reference of your own, without having read it; if you use your own work submitted for another class.

Academic Integrity

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see <http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/students/> for more information).

Language of Submission

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. The oral exam can be in English or in French.

Health and Wellness Resources at McGill

Student well-being is a priority for the University. All of our health and wellness resources have been integrated into a single Student Wellness Hub, your one-stop shop for everything related to your physical and mental health. If you need to access services or get more information, visit the Virtual Hub at mcgill.ca/wellness-hub or drop by the Brown Student Services Building (downtown) or Centennial Centre (Macdonald Campus). Within your faculty, you can also connect with your Local Wellness Advisor (to make an appointment, visit mcgill.ca/lwa).